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PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993

PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1994-1995

Revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions of the Economic and Social Council at its organizational and substantive sessions of 1993

Fifth report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/48/19), in which he submits revised estimates attributable to resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its organizational and substantive sessions of 1993. During its consideration of the above-mentioned report, the Advisory Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General who provided additional information.

2. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraphs 2 and 3 of the Secretary-General's report that the total estimated requirements arising out of resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council amount to $1,755,900 for the year 1993 and $14,422,200 for the biennium 1994-1995, totalling $16,178,100, and that the total requirements cover both conference-servicing ($9,673,500) and substantive ($6,504,600) costs.

3. However, for reasons given in paragraphs 4 and 5 of the Secretary-General's report, no appropriation has been requested for conference-servicing costs nor against requirements for 1993. With regard to the substantive additional requirements for the biennium 1994-1995, the total amount is $5,657,500. Of this, an amount of $3,190,900 has already been requested in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995. Consequently, total additional requirements for activities derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the proposed programme budget for 1994-1995, amount to $2,466,600. The table

following paragraph 6 of the report indicates the budget sections against which the additional requirements are requested.

4. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraphs 44 to 52 of the report of the Secretary-General that an amount of $2,592,300 is requested for the biennium 1994-1995 for the implementation of Economic and Social Council decision 1993/254 of 28 July 1993 on the situation of human rights in Cambodia. As indicated in paragraph 52 of the report, the amounts requested are for items, such as salary and common staff costs ($2,105,900), general temporary assistance ($10,000), travel of the Special Representative ($100,000), travel of staff within Cambodia ($71,000) and operating expenses ($305,400). As indicated in the table following paragraph 6 of the Secretary-General's report, an amount of $2,000,000 has been included for resource growth against section 21 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 in relation to the new Economic and Social Council mandated activities. Thus, the total additional amount requested under section 21 would be $2,003,100.

5. The Advisory Committee, however, believes that the overall estimates for these items are high; there appears to be no proper justification provided for the amount of travel. The Committee also believes that some of the items such as premises and office space could be provided by the host country. No mention has been made of the terms and conditions of service and level of the Special Representative and whether the post would be filled on an "as required" basis.

6. In this connection, the Advisory Committee recalls that by a letter dated 2 September 1993, in which it had concurred in the Secretary-General entering into commitments in an amount not exceeding $288,000 for the financing of activities in 1993, it had also requested that the Secretary-General submit a report which, inter alia, would "present proposals for a continued United Nations human rights presence in Cambodia, its operational requirements, and an indication of the extent to which it could be integrated with other United Nations activities in Cambodia".

7. The Advisory Committee recommends that, at this stage, an amount of $550,000 be approved under section 21 of the programme budget for the first six months of the biennium for financing of activities relating to Economic and Social Council decision 1993/254, pending submission of a report as requested, including details on the Special Representative post, as well as justification for the number and level of all other posts in terms of functions and workload.

8. With regard to the question of defraying travel costs of the representatives of Member States attending meetings of inter-sessional working groups of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, as envisaged in paragraph 96 of the Secretary-General's report, the Advisory Committee points out that this procedure was also followed in respect of Council resolution 1992/18.

9. The Advisory Committee was informed that, pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1993/32 of 27 July 1993, which requested the Secretary-General to make available the necessary resources for the participation of the least developed countries in the regional preparatory meetings for the Ninth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of

Offenders and the Congress itself, provision has been included in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 to enable such participation. The Committee recalls that, following a request by the General Assembly in its decision 46/450 of 20 December 1991, the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly, at its forty-seventh session, a review/evaluation of the current system of travel and related entitlements for members of organs and subsidiary organs. This report requested guidelines from the General Assembly with regard to the issue of exceptional assistance to the least developed countries to enable them to participate in meetings of bodies whose members are not entitled to the payment of travel expenses. The Assembly has deferred consideration of that report. In the meantime and pending consideration of the report, the Assembly may wish, pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1993/32, to grant an exception and approve that the travel expenses of representatives of least developed countries to the regional preparatory meetings for the Ninth Congress, and to the Congress itself, be defrayed.

10. As indicated in the table following paragraph 99, additional requirements of $397,500 and $66,000, arising out of various resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council have been estimated against sections 8 and 9, respectively, of the programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995. The Advisory Committee has no objection to these estimates by the Secretary-General.

11. Accordingly, the Advisory Committee recommends that, at this stage, the Fifth Committee take note of the estimate of $1,013,500 inclusive of the amount of $550,000 indicated in paragraph 7 above, on the understanding that such appropriations as may be necessary will be requested by the Secretary-General in the context of a consolidated statement of programme budget implications and revised estimates to be submitted to the General Assembly.